



West African Journal of Education

VOL. XXXV 2015

ISSN: 0043-2997

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Lecturers and Students' Perception of Factors Influencing School Dropout among Undergraduates in the University of Ibadan

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Abstract

This study investigated factors responsible for undergraduate dropouts in the University of Ibadan. The samples of the study were 150 students of the faculty of science and college of medicine (M = 64, F = 86) and 50 faculty of science and college of medicine lecturers (M 35 F 15) selected through simple random sampling technique. Two questionnaires developed by the researcher: Student perception of school dropouts' questionnaire (SPSDQ) and lecturer perception about school dropout questionnaire (LPSDQ) were used to collect data from the respondents. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation. Findings of the research revealed that Faculty of science students have the following averages for the dependent variables: (misconduct 54%; crime 61% and Academic failure 83%); college of medicine revealed the following averages for the variables (Misconduct – Nil; crime – Nil and academic failure – 77%) faculty of science lecturers revealed the following for dependent variables: (misconduct – 60% crime – 70% academic factors – 81%) and college of medicine lecturers revealed (misconduct – Nil; Crime – Nil and Academic factors – 69%). The study recommended that all stakeholders should combat dropout syndrome among undergraduate students.

Keywords: School dropout, university undergraduate students, academic failure, misconduct

Background to the Study

Education and manpower development cannot be separated. Education and skilled manpower are a sine qua non to countries' attainment and sustenance of national development. It is a well known fact that university education plays important role in the provision of high level skilled manpower which is necessary for development of national economy (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2008). Nwakwe and Emeke (2004) reiterate that Education, which is often seen as "a means of promoting equality, also can contribute to inequality in today's knowledge-based world if not well handled. According to Falaye and Gesinde (2003), our schools that ought to be a platform for training, building and all round educational development is bedeviled with a number of maladaptive behaviours which on the long run ruin the career pursuit of learners. Some of these behaviours, according to Falaye and Gesinde (2003), include non-school attendance, examination malpractices, poor academic performance, academic failure, academic incompetence, school dissertation and attrition, cultism, stealing, riots and sexual harassment.

The dropping out phenomenon not only absorbs a large share of the limited resources available for education, thus translating into wastage but it also exerts a terrible personal toll on the individuals involved and as well create missed opportunities for them, their communities and entire nation (Emeke & Adegoke, 2005). According to Dekalb (1999), the consequences of dropout misdemeanors extend beyond the four walls of the academic environment. Most dropouts constitute

nuisance to themselves, communities and nations at large, as victims may be at risk of or be prone to vices such as armed robbery, debilitating family structures and standards, exclusion from meaningful livelihood and societal functions to mention a few. These misdemeanors can affect the strength and developmental phases of a nation. Unfortunately, there is no full proof method to identify students who will drop out of school.

Kelly, (2008), reporting on the United States of America's National Dropout Prevention Center, stated that, "there is no single risk factor that can be used to accurately predict who is at risk of dropping out". Instead, dropping out seems to be a function of multiple factors that often interact with each other. Based on their research findings, the National Dropout Prevention Center (Kelly, 2008) concludes that predictions as to who will dropout are more accurate when multiple risk factors and domains are considered.

Thus, the University of Ibadan student information handbook (2000), states that the primary function of the Premier University in Nigeria, is excellent education of which the teaching of culture and inculcation of good character is an integral part. When a student accepts admission to the University, it is assumed that he has a serious purpose and a sincere interest in his own intellectual and social development. Such a student is expected to comport himself as a responsible citizen, in accordance with the University's regulation and rules.

Therefore, a high standard of personal integrity is expected of every student of the University. According to the University Handbook punishment meted out to students depends on the gravity of their offence, such offences includes:

1. Cases of Misconduct which THE SDC could Try: These include:
 - a. Examination Misconduct, numbly behaviour etc.
 - b. Unruly behaviour
 - c. Indecent behaviour
 - d. Vandalism
 - e. Unauthorized transfer of bed space
 - f. Unauthorized displacement of university property
 - g. Pilfering
 - h. Insubordination
 - i. Direct sale of bed space/squatting in halls of residence.
 - j. Membership of a secret cult on campus
 - k. Infringement of other university regulations
2. Criminal Offences which should be referred to the police for necessary action (Gross Misconduct): In this regard, the final decision of the student Disciplinary Committee would depend on the outcome of police investigation. These include:
 - a. Fraud
 - b. Theft
 - c. Burglary
 - d. Assault occasioning harm
 - e. Murder
 - f. Membership of a secret cult
 - g. Possession of fire arms
 - h. Arson
 - i. Rape
 - j. Possession and use of hard drugs and drug trafficking.

However, over time, many students have often fallen prey to the rules guiding studentship in the University. Some of such offences lead to their expulsion from the University. Apart from that, a student may be required to withdraw from the University if he is not able to cope academically. In supporting this view, Cambiano, Denny and Devere (2000) stated that school drop out is related to low GPA. According to Kelly, (2008) academic Performance and school engagement matter equally and they are often intertwined. Programs that have been designed to prevent dropout vary widely in a literature review of effective interventions designed to address dropout, Lehr, Hansen, Sinclair; and Christenson (2003) cited in Kelly, (2008) categorized successful interventions as, personal/ affective, academic, school structure and work related.

But universities cannot be divested from the society in which they operates, because a University is not an island. What obtains within a University could be a reflection of its immediate and larger society. Nigeria is currently witnessing some anti-social economic dynamics which appear to have taken the nation unaware. The sudden rise in cases of militant agitations, kidnappings, armed robberies and other social maladies could impact negatively on institution of learning if not properly addressed.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of students dropping out of universities seems to have become a recurring decimal despite the effort put in place to check this unwholesome phenomenon. The occurrence seems to have worsen following the socio-economic and political dynamics in Nigeria. Therefore, the study investigated factors that may be responsible for students drop out in some faculties of the University of Ibadan.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of faculty of science and college of medicine students' about undergraduate school dropouts in their faculties?
2. What is the profile of college of medicine students' perception about undergraduate school dropouts at their college?
3. What is the perception of faculty of science and college of medicine lecturers about undergraduate school dropouts in their faculties?
4. What is the profile of college of medicine lecturers' perception about undergraduate school dropouts at their faculty?

Methodology

The study is a survey research type. The population of the study is made up of all the lecturers and students of the college of medicine and faculty of science of the University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Simple random technique was used to select 75 students from the college of medicine and 75 students from the faculty of science making total number of 150 as student respondents. Simple random technique was also used to select 25 lecturers from the college of medicine and 25 lecturers from the faculty of science making a total of 50 lecturers. Two validated instruments were used in this study namely: Student perception of school dropouts' questionnaire (SPSDQ) and lecturer perception about school dropout questionnaire (LPSDQ).The study employed the use of both the descriptive and inferential statistics in analyzing the data via frequencies, percentages and the t-test was used to establish research findings.

Results

Research question 1, 2 and 4 reveal consensus opinions of students and lecturers of the Faculty of Science and the College of Medicines about their perception about causal factors of undergraduate

dropouts in their respective faculty or college as seen in corresponding appendixes. In other to show-case clarity, the decision point was put at “probability of occurrence” and “probability of non-occurrence”. The summation of the frequencies or percentages of “often and “very often” = probability of occurrence (P.O.O.) of such factors in the faculty of Science or the college of medicine while “rarely” and “Never” = probability of non-occurrence (P.N.O) of such factors. Descriptive statistics was employed in answering all the research questions via frequencies and percentages.

Research question one: What is the perception of faculty of science and college of medicine students’ about undergraduate school dropouts in their faculties?

Table1: The profile of the faculty of Science Students perception about undergraduate dropouts

S/N	Perception on misconduct	P.N.O	P.O.O	Decision
1.	Misconduct are practiced by students of this faculty/college	52	48	It does not occur
2.	Some students drop out because of examination misconduct	50.7	49.3	It does not occur
3.	Some students are expelled for unruly behaviour in this faculty	58.7	41.3	It does not occur
4.	The use of fake results leads to expulsion of some students in my faculty/college	46.3	53.7	Occurs
Perception on Crime				
5.	Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from my faculty/college	40	60	Occurs
6.	Fraud leads to students dropout in my faculty/college	46.7	53.3	Occurs
7.	Some students involvement in occultism may lead to their dropout of school in my faculty/college	29.3	70.3	Occurs
Perception on Failure				
8.	Some students with low C.G.P.A may drop out of this faculty	18.7	81.3	Occurs
9.	Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from my faculty/college	20	80	Occurs
10.	Some students may drop out if they do not to meet up with 75% class attendance in my faculty/college	84	16	It does not occur
11.	Some students dropped out due to failure in some courses	52	48	It does not occur
12.	Some students drop out when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty	33.3	86.7	Occurs
Perception on Other Grounds				
13.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are handicapped financially	80	20	It does not occur
14.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the programme is rigorous	76	24	It does not occur

15.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the courses are difficult to pass	72	28	It does not occur
16.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are victimized by lecturers.	89.3	10.7	It does not occur
17.	Some students drop out of my faculty/college because their lives are threatened by cultist	89.3	10.7	It does not occur
18.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college on health grounds	82.7	17.3	It does not occur
19.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college due to poor family finances	74.7	25.3	It does not occur

In the light of the above result findings in table 1, it reveals the occurrences of the following as factors responsible for undergraduate dropouts in the faculty of science with their corresponding percentages (%)

Perception on misconduct

- The use of fake results 53.7%

Perception on crime

- Students in criminal acts are expelled 60.0%
- Fraud leads to students dropout 53.3%
- Students involvement in cultism 70.1%

Perception on academics failure

- Low C.G.P.A 81.3%
- Academic incompetence 80%
- Minimum unit deficiency 86.7%

Perception on other grounds Nil

Undergraduate students in the faculty of science dropout from school on the ground of misconduct, criminal acts and academic failure.

Research Question two: What is the profile of the college of medicine students' perception about undergraduate dropouts?

Table 2: Profile of the college of medicine students' perception about undergraduate dropouts

S/N	Perception on misconduct	P.N.O	P.O.O	Decision
1.	Misconduct are practiced by students of this faculty/college	76	24	It does not occur
2.	Some students drop out because of examination misconduct	84	16	It does not occur
3.	Some students are expelled for unruly behaviour in this faculty	86.7	23.3	It does not occur
4.	The use of fake results leads to expulsion of some students in my faculty/college	62.7	37.3	It does not occur
	Perception on Crime			It does not occur
5.	Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from my faculty/college	77.3	22.7	It does not occur
6.	Fraud leads to students dropout in my	74.7	23.3	It does not occur

	faculty/college			
7.	Some students involvement in occultism may lead to their dropout of school in my faculty/college	66.7	33.3	It does not occur
	Perception on Failure			It does not occur
8.	Some students with low C.G.P.A may drop out of this faculty	18.7	81.3	It does not occur
9.	Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from my faculty/college	16	84	It does not occur
10.	Some students may drop out if they do not to meet up with 75% class attendance in my faculty/college	80	20	It does not occur
11.	Some students dropped out due to failure in some courses	17.3	69.3	Occurs
12.	Some students drop out when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty	28.0	72	Occurs
	Perception on Other Grounds			
13.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are handicapped financially	82.7	17.3	It does not occur
14.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the programme is rigorous	80	20	It does not occur
15.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the courses are difficult to pass	74.3	25.3	It does not occur
16.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are victimized by lecturers.	94.7	5.3	It does not occur
17.	Some students drop out of my faculty/college because their lives are threatened by cultist	94.7	5.3	It does not occur
18.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college on health grounds	84	16	It does not occur
19.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college due to poor family finances	84	16	It does not occur

In the light of the above result findings in table2,it reveals the occurrences of the following as factors responsible undergraduate dropouts in the college of medicine with their corresponding percentages (%).

Perception on misconduct

Nil

Perception on crime

Nil

Perception on Academic failure

• Low C.G.P.A

81.3%

• Academic incompetence

84%

• failure in some courses

69.3%

• Minimum unit deficiency

72%

Perception on other grounds

Nil

Undergraduate students of the college of medicines drop out from school on the ground of academic factors i.e. incompetence and failure.

Research Question Three: What is the perception of faculty of science and college of medicine lecturers about undergraduate school dropouts in their faculties?

Table 3: Profile of faculty of science lecturers' perception about undergraduate dropouts

S/N	Perception on misconduct	P.N.O	P.O.O	Decision
1.	Misconduct are practiced by students of this faculty/college	60	40	It does not occur
2.	Some students drop out because of examination misconduct	48	52	Occurs
3.	Some students are expelled for unruly behaviour in this faculty	64	36	It does not occur
4.	The use of fake results leads to expulsion of some students in my faculty/college	32	68	Occurs
Perception on Crime				
5.	Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from my faculty/college	24	76	Occurs
6.	Fraud leads to students dropout in my faculty/college	60	40	It does not occur
7.	Some students involvement in occultism may lead to their dropout of school in my faculty/college	36	64	Occurs
Perception on Failure				
8.	Some students with low C.G.P.A may drop out of this faculty	16	84	Occurs
9.	Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from my faculty/college	4	96	Occurs
10.	Some students may drop out if they do not to meet up with 75% class attendance in my faculty/college	84	16	It does not occur
11.	Some students dropped out due to failure in some courses	48	52	Occurs
12.	Some students drop out when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty	8	92	Occurs
Perception on Other Grounds				
13.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are handicapped financially	76	24	It does not occur
14.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the programme is rigorous	88	12	It does not occur
15.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the courses are difficult to pass	96	4	It does not occur
16.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are victimized by lecturers.	100	0	It does not occur
17.	Some students drop out of my faculty/college because their lives are threatened by cultist	96	4	It does not occur
18.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college on health grounds	84	16	It does not occur
19.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college due to poor family finances	72	28	It does not occur

In the light of the above result findings, table3,it reveals the occurrences of the following as factors responsible for undergraduate dropouts in the faculty of science with their corresponding percentages (%).

Perception on misconduct

- Examination misconduct 52%
- Use of fake result 68%

Perception on crime

- Criminal acts 64%
- Occultism involvement 76%

Perception on academic failure

- Low C.G.P. A. 84%
- Academic incompetence 96%
- Dropped out due to failure 52%
- Minimum unit pass deficiency 92%

Perception on other grounds

Nil

Undergraduate students of the college of medicines drop out from school on the grounds of misconduct, crime and academic factors i.e. incompetence and failure.

Research Question Four: What is the profile of the college of medicine lecturers' perception about undergraduate dropouts?

Table 4: Profile of the college of medicine lecturers' perception about undergraduate dropouts

	Perception on misconduct	P.N.O	P.O.O	Decision
1.	Misconduct are practiced by students of this faculty/college	68	32	It does not occur
2.	Some students drop out because of examination misconduct	72	28	It does not occur
3.	Some students are expelled for unruly behaviour in this faculty	88	12	It does not occur
4.	The use of fake results leads to expulsion of some students in my faculty/college	76	24	It does not occur
	Perception on Crime			
5.	Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from my faculty/college	80	20	It does not occur
6.	Fraud leads to students dropout in my faculty/college	84	16	It does not occur
7.	Some students involvement in occultism may lead to their dropout of school in my faculty/college	72	28	It does not occur
	Perception on Failure			
8.	Some students with low C.G.P.A may drop out of this faculty	32	68	Occurs
9.	Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from my faculty/college	28	72	Occurs
10.	Some students may drop out if they do not to meet	64	36	It does not occur

	up with 75% class attendance in my faculty/college			
11.	Some students dropped out due to failure in some courses	28	72	Occurs
12.	Some students drop out when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty	36	64	Occurs
	Perception on Other Grounds			
13.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are handicapped financially	96	4	It does not occur
14.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the programme is rigorous	60	40	It does not occur
15.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because the courses are difficult to pass	56	44	It does not occur
16.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college because they are victimized by lecturers.	88	12	It does not occur
17.	Some students drop out of my faculty/college because their lives are threatened by cultist	92	8	It does not occur
18.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college on health grounds	76	24	It does not occur
19.	Some students dropout of my faculty/college due to poor family finances	88	12	It does not occur

In the light of the above result findings in table 4, it reveals the occurrences of the following as factors responsible for undergraduate dropouts in the faculty of science with their corresponding percentages (%).

Perception on misconduct

Perception on academic failure	Nil
Low C.G.P.A	68%
Academic incompletes	72%
Failure in some courses	72%
Minimum unit pass	64%

Undergraduate students of the college of medicines drop out from school on the grounds of academic factors i.e. incompetence and failure.

Discussion

The study has been able to demonstrate that causal factors of undergraduate school dropout in the faculty of science could be traced to divers factors subsumed in three out of four independent variables. This lends credence to the fact that no single factor accounts for students' dropout of school in the faculty of science. According to the U.S. National dropout prevention Center (2002), as stated by Kelly, (2008) "dropping out seems to be a function of multiple factors across multiple domains, with the factors often interacting with each other. This is indicated by census opinion of respondents in the following hierarchy (i.e. in order of their prominence).

1. Some students dropout when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty
2. Some students with low C.G.P.A may dropout of the faculty
3. Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from faculty/college
4. Some students involvement in cultism may lead to their dropping out of school in faculty/College

5. Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from faculty/college
6. The use of fake results leads to expulsion of some students in faculty/college
7. Fraud leads to students dropout in my faculty/college
8. Some students dropout because of examination misconduct

The above profile of causal factors in the faculty of science could summarily be traced to misconduct, crime and academic failure of student. Therefore they are summarily caused by:

- Academic factors and
- Psychosocial factors (i.e. maladaptive behavioural factors)

Finally, it suffices to state that the 49.3% count on examination misconducts is in consonance with the University of Ibadan Student Handbook 2000 edition that cases of examination misconduct do not often lead to expulsion but to rustication of students from the University. Upon which students may be prone to dropout of school considering the duration he would be out of the University.

The analysis in table 2 shows that, the major factor of medical students bothers on academic incompetence and failure. It further reveals that, factors under misconduct and crimes are tending towards zero count in the college of medicine. The following frequencies give the consensus opinion of the respondents:

- Some students who are academic incompetent drops out from faculty/college.
- Some students with low C.GPA may dropout of this faculty/college.
- Some students dropout when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty
- Some students drop out due to failure in some courses

The findings lend credence to a report by Ilogu (1996) in "School indiscipline and remedies" that student drop out of school as a result of frequent academic failure.

The research analysis of table 3 shows the profile of faculty of science lecturers' perception about undergraduate school dropouts.

It reveals significant correlation with that of the students of the same faculty though with different percentage counts and iterance. The findings show that the causal factors of undergraduate school dropouts revolve around the premise of misconduct, crime and academic incompetence/failure. It hierarchically goes as follows:

- Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from faculty/college
- Some students drop out when they don't pass up to the minimum units in the faculty
- Some students with low C.G.P.A may drop out of the faculty
- Some students who engage in criminal acts are expelled from faculty/college
- The use of fake results to expulsion of some students in faculty/college
- Some students involvement in occultism may lead to their dropout of school in faculty/college
- Some student dropout due to failure in some courses
- Some students drop out because of examination misconduct
- From the above profile, the causal factors of undergraduate school dropouts in the faculty of science could be traced to misconduct, crime and academic failure of students. Which are summarily caused by:
 - Academic factors and
 - Psycho-social factors (i.e. maladaptive behavioural factors)

This is supported by the opinion of Falaye & Gesunde, (2003). That “The school as a place where people are educated is bedeviled with a number of maladaptive behaviours such as: non-school attendance behaviour, examination malpractice poor academic performance academic failure, cultism, stealing riots and sexual harassment.

Research question four and research question one have similarities and corresponding correlation as the profile of both lecturer and students of the college of medicine agrees to the fact that, the predominant factor responsible for undergraduate school dropout brothers on academics. Table 4 show-cased the following hierarchically as causes of undergraduate school dropout at the college of medicine.

- Some students who are academically incompetent drops out from faculty
- Some students dropped out due to failure on some courses
- Some students with low C.G.P.A many dropout of the faculty
- Some students dropout when they don't pass up to minimum units in the faculty

The findings are in support with the opinion of Cambiano, Denny and Devore (2000).

- That drop out risk is associated with low GPA.
- The above also points to the fact that the undergraduate medical students frequency counts on misconduct and criminal acts is insignificant and tending to a zero count i.e. the students in the faculty were not as such prone to maladaptive behaviours that endanger their academic pursuit.

This study reveals that maladaptive behaviours are present with undergraduate students of faculty of science and college of medicine. Students have the tendencies to be at risk of dropping out in the faculty of science and the college of medicine. The faculty of science undergraduate students may dropout of school through the influence of the following factors.

Misconduct:

- Examination misconduct;
- The use of fake results;

Crime:

- Engagement in criminal act;
- Fraudulent practices and
- Cultism involvement

Academic:

- Low C.G.P.A
- Academic incompetence;
- Failure in some courses; and
- Inability to pass up to the minimum unit

1. The factor responsible for undergraduate school dropout in college of medicine is primarily academic factors such as:

- Low C.G.P.A;
- Academic incompetence;
- Failure in some courses and
- Inability to pass up to the minimum required unit

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- There should be incorporation of the interplay of social institutions such as family, functional education, culture and religion in combating maladaptive behaviours among under graduate students
- There should be government intervention in enhancing synergy (school friendly incentives) between students' academic exercise and field exercises by providing school friendly incentives for better learning e.g. constant electricity, subsidies on fees, scholarships etc.
- There should be sound and workable lecturer – student mentoring and monitoring practices at different domains such as department, hostel etc.
- Well equipped vigilante squad to combat misconducts, cultism and other criminal acts on campus with the support of electricity supply at late night either through electric power agencies or stand by generators.
- Students work load should be evenly spread across the session i.e. one semester should not outweigh the other so as to reduce the learners' burdens while studying.
- Parents should not pre-empt their children's choice of career pursuit but they should be allowed to go for programme where they have strength and comparative advantage.
- Every institution should carry out effective counseling and screening exercises before admitting students. Upon which they should be given the ideal placement for a programme to pursue.

Irrespective of whichever factors whether prominent or latent leading to dropping out from school, it becomes imperative and should behoove stakeholders of students education i.e. government, non-governmental agencies, policy makers, parents, guardians and individuals to be concerned and interested about these wastes of brains and nation builders with great potentialities. As it could drain and weaken the strength and progress of a country, community, home and individuals concerned.

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